

# Blooming in Darkness

by BluBoo0003

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Summary: He took in a war torn, pinkette orphan and brought her into his life as it was falling apart. No one expected the pinkette to bloom into being one of the finest kunoichi in the village when she was no Uchiha. And certainly no one expected her to be of interest to the Uchiha Clan. However, it appears that there are beautiful things still blooming in the darkness of a warring home.

## 1. Budding in Darkness

**\*\*I Do Not Own Naruto\*\***

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><p><strong>Budding in Darkness<strong>

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><p>The tears had yet to stop as carried the broken body of the woman who had loved him through the rain and mud, he had waded through the blood, and bodies of the after math of the carnage. Finally, exhaustion had him collapsing with her battered body in his arms as he held her close.<p>

He had failed, he had failed them both, he hated knowing this, he despised knowing he had failed the simple promise he had made to a man he'd consider his best friend, he hated himself for failing them

both.

"I'm sorry, I'm sorry," he kept whispering to the dead woman in his arms. He hated himself for this, he hated having done this to his own team. He rocked the body in his arms as he sobbed out his pain.

He must have passed out, he hadn't expected it but he woke with her body in his arms as a set of large green eyes looking at him as a messy pink head tilted to the side. She was a toddler, guessing from the way she was looking at him with curiosity.

"Go away," he snapped.

The pinkette didn't, instead she placed her hand on his brow, she tilted her head in thought. He noticed how gritty she was looking, how tattered her clothes were. probably a war orphan, after all, the war had raged on outside of the villages. He was very likely looking at a victim of this war. But it didn't matter to him as he pulled Rin's body closer to him and scowled at the girl.

"Go away!" he snapped angrily.

The girl stood up and trotted off, he tightened his grip on the cold body in his arms. His tears were falling again.

A moment later he was looking at the toddler who then reached over to him and offered him a tattered thing of water.

"Go away," he shouted at the toddler as he pulled away from her, holding Rin tighter to him. The girl trotted towards him then and pressed cup to his mask where his lips were. He was startled at her bluntness. He drank water or he'd have choked on it. Once the toddler seemed satisfied with those actions she reached over to Rin's face, he tried to pull Rin away from the girl, however he wasn't fast enough.

The toddler rested her small brow on Rin's brow, the girl frowned and then she gently shut Rin's dead eyes. Kakshi stared at the little girl who looked so old for her age; he put her at two or three years old, and she looked like she had lived a lifetime already. She sat down then and he just stared at her, green eyes stared back at him, and then she smiled calmly, he felt an ease wash over him at the sight of her innocent smile. He carefully stood up on shaky legs, as he walked past her he felt her get up, her small hand grabbed his pants leg and she trotted along with him.

He didn't know why he didn't rebuff the girl, however he let the toddler hold onto him as he walked slowly with her and Rin's body in his arms.

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><p><em>Three weeks laterâ€|<em>

It was the oddest sight in the village, Minato and Kushina seemed to find the sight of the eighteen year old with the toddler odd but

sweet. Might Guy thought this to be hilarious for some reason and teased him about being a daddy; now, Kakashi didn't care about the teasing however the toddler who had adopted him did seem to mind, she'd often times kick Guy in the shins for his teasing. The Uchiha thought thisâ€¦ odd; but did not question it. And the village, well, the village just didn't know what to do about this; however, no one was willing to take the toddler away from Kakashi though.

Which brought the copy ninja to today, the pink toddler was clean and perched on his shoulders as he carried her through the village with him towards his mentor's home. He was going to ask his mentor about adopting her, he didn't see a problem with it since he hadn't really noticed his taking her in.

"Where we go?" the pink girl demanded as she played with his spikey hair.

"To a friend's," he answered honestly. She giggled, and he didn't want to know what the toddler was finding amusing. It was when someone slammed into him that he looked down, he was looking down on the youngest Uchiha.

"Oh," was his response.

"Sasuke! Wait up!" a voice shouted, the black haired boy looked over his shoulder to where Uchiha Itachi had appeared with a girl right behind him; another Uchiha no doubt and then back to him.

"You're pink," Sasuke blurted out to the girl on Kakashi's shoulders.

"Yes, yes she is," Kakashi agreed.

"I like pink," the girl stated hotly and he grinned behind his mask at her superior attitude. The little pinkette was going to grow up into a spitfire one day.

"You're annoying!" Sasuke snapped and then he darted off. Itachi and the girl waved as they ran after the young Uchiha, Kakashi looked up to his green eyed companion who was looking confused.

"What's annoying?" the pinkette asked him.

"Uhâ€¦ something irksome," he guessed.

"Am I annoying?" the girl asked him.

"No," he answered as he finally made it to the Uzumaki residence, the chaos ensued when he opened the door.

"Hey Kakashi!" Kushina greeted as she held her jinchÅ«riki toddler; Uzumaki Naruto.

"Kushina," he greeted, the hyperactive blonde toddler, he picked the nameless toddler off of his shoulders then and set her down on the ground. The pinkette promptly grabbed his pants leg as he sat down with Minato at the table.

"So, what can we do for you Kakashi?" Minato asked.

"I was wondering how I would go about adopting a kid," he admitted. The pinkette crawled into his lap then and yanked his arms around her as she smiled happily. He smiled at her though she couldn't see it. Honestly, this child was his sanity since everything had happened. First losing Obito, then failing in his promise to his friend and teammate and then killing Rin because she had tossed herself in front of his fist— well, it was breaking him. And then there was this child, a child who had demands, a child who needed attention, a child who did not let him sit around breaking in the dark. Speaking of the child, she swatted Naruto away fiercely.

"Oh? You want to adopt the girl?" Minato asked him.

He nodded.

"Well, she'll need a name, and I'll get the paperwork on the fast track for approval," Minato said as he leaned back in his chair with a smile.

"A name?" Kakashi questioned. He honestly hadn't thought to give the girl a name, she didn't seem to need one. However, he supposed everyone needed a name, and as he looked down at green and pink he couldn't help but think of how much like a sakura blossom she seemed to be like, and it was not just because she pink and green. The little pinkette seemed to be a little resilient beauty in the midst of a hellish world fighting to obtain peace again. This little blossom had brought beauty after all the hells he had created for his mind to survive.

"Well, yes, every child needs a name," Kushina informed him bluntly as she sat down with Naruto. The pinkette smiled.

"I like your hair!" the pinkette declared loudly. Kushina smiled.

"I like yours as well," Kushina informed the pinkette.

"Sakura," Kakashi said.

"Yes?" the toddler tilted her head to look up to him then.

"Alright, the name is solved, her name will be Sakura," Kakashi decided. Minato smiled then.

"Sa-ku-ra, Sakura!" the girl declared. "I'm Sakura! I'm Sakura! Sakura!" she started humming with delight at having a name then, he just decided it was for the best not to point out she was being annoying now. Especially after he had told her she was not annoying anymore.

"Well, then I'll get you the paperwork, and I'll expedite it. But before I do that; are you certain about this? This is not something you can walk away from once you commit, Sakura here will be relying on you for the rest of her life, and you can't give her up," Minato pointed out.

"I know," Kakashi admitted, however, all he could think of was the war torn child he had seen staring at him with wide innocent green eyes. The child who had closed his friend's eyes. He would make up for his failures in life with her, he would never let her down as he had Obito and Rin, he would never let her fail or feel pain again.

He'd take care of this pinkette to the best of his abilities.

"Well, if you know and accept that, then I'll see what I can do about getting you those papers," Minato smiled.

"OW!" a toddler shrieked, he looked at the pinkette sitting on his lap and her irritated look.

"No pull hair!" she shouted angrily as Naruto sat on the ground rubbing his head. Kushina chuckled, and Minato was laughing, Naruto was pouting. His toddler was fuming though, and he smirked; yep, a little spitfire was here in his arms. Well, his life would at least no longer be dark and gloomy, he supposed looking at the scowling pinkette.

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><p><strong>Still in the Naruto mood...<strong>

\*\*That's all for now folks!\*\*

\*\*Enjoy Blooming in Darkness! =)\*\*

## 2. Seedlings

\*\*I Do Not Own Naruto\*\*

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><p><strong>Seedlings<strong>

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><p>The one think Kakashi never figured to have happen in his life was how it literally revolved around the pinkette.<p>

Adopting her had been easy enough, which was surprising to him. Once it was official though the girl paraded around everywhere with a copy of the adoption papers and told anyone within hearing range she had a family now. It had shocked him how happy the girl had been with that simple slip of paper. Kushina had tried to ask Sakura about her past, but the toddler who frown and then stomp off with the paper in hand repeating darkly that she had a family. It gave him an idea as to what the girl had been through.

However, with adopting Sakura came the reality of parenting a toddler.

One, his bed was no longer his own; it was invaded by a little heat monster. Seriously! How much heat could someone so little make!? No matter, the other thing he lost was cooking rights. If he wanted the

toddler to eat, he had to cook what she would eat; which basically made his life very difficult, Sakura would try a bite of anything he cooked. However, if she didn't like it one bite then she would not eat it. Also, there was the matter of keeping track of her, it was difficult, she had excellent chakra control for any child. She may not have much in the chakra department, but it was clear she had control over what chakra she did have, and having a toddler sitting happily on the ceiling—well, it made it difficult to fully keep track of her.

He had found her in the following places: on the roof, on the water tower, at the top of the largest tree, the Hokage carvings, his ceiling (repeatedly), the tops telephone poles, the ceiling fan, and even the radio antenna; there were lots of other places for her to hide out on that only one with chakra could get to. Minato, Fugaku, and Kushina all took amusement in his plight; however, he had rarely been amused with Sakura's disappearing; at least until he had figured out a way to turn it into a game and not just random disappearances on her part, if she thought it a game then she did it when he said, or when she thought it appropriate.

Sakura's ability to conceal her chakra and control her chakra never ceased to amaze him, even jonin he knew could not control their chakra to the degree his kid was displaying.

But overall, he found a purpose in his life since taking Sakura in.

At least she was an easy girl to take care of, she didn't want much, but he did have to buy her clothes, she didn't seem to really want toys but he had bought her a few, and a few other things he was told children needed. However, she didn't seem to care much about things, just her copy of the papers and him. Still, it didn't stop him from trying to give her everything he could give her.

But there appeared to be some things he could not give her.

"Sakura!" he called out when he walked to the park, the girl was concealing her chakra again. Sighing again he had a feeling he knew where to find her, he did not understand why she ran off when she was crying but he knew that was what she was doing if she was hiding after coming to the park.

"Pink went that way!" Naruto shouted and pointed where he had seen Sakura run off.

He nodded and followed the direction the boy had pointed.

His hands were in his pockets as he strolled after her, the girl was good, he'd give her that. However, he lifted his headband and blinked his Sharingan active as he began scanning the area for her. She was good, he would admit that, however, he had the advantage between the hounds he could summon and the Sharingan. Sakura would not be hidden from him for long.

"Sakura," he sighed when he was standing right under her.

"How you find me?" she sniffled. He tilted his head back to see her crying again and he sighed; another thing he didn't understand was

all her emotions, she had so many of them and they were easily beaten up.

"Because, we're family," he stated and then he hopped up to where she had perched herself.

"We are?" she asked with a sniffle.

"Yes," he nodded.

"They say we not," she mumbled and hugged her knees as she curled in on herself then. He sighed and then he placed a hand on her pink head.

"We are," he assured her. "And who says we're not?"

She pointed to a group of kids playing near the lake.

"Ah, well they are civilian kids, and you're a shinobi; what they say does not mean anything in the world of shinobi," he informed her. It was not arrogance leading his words, it was being a shinobi who had killed, and lost friends, it was from fighting and losing himself entirely to be a shinobi that had him saying his words. And unless you lived the life of a warrior, then you did not even comprehend just that meant. And families were more than blood, he knew, he had lost two families, his father, his squad members Obito and Rin.

"I'm shinobi?" she asked uncertainly.

"Well, you're my kid so of course you," he reasoned.

"Am I billboard brow too?" she asked. And now he was treading into the dangerous unknown, he didn't know anything about girls and looks! Oh, he knew an attractive woman when he saw her, however, in regards of smaller females!?

"Wellâ€¦ if you have a large forehead that just meansâ€¦ you have a big brain which makes you smart," he guessed. "Smarts are better than looks," he admitted. Especially in regards to shinobi, the smart shinobi was a cunning one, and the cunning ones were dangerous.

"Huh?" she tilted her head.

"But, if you're that concerned about it, I think you're cute," he settled for. She just smiled a bit and he sighed with relief; kids were tough to understand.

"Sasuke! Wait up!" both he and Sakura looked down as their tree was climbed, he found himself looking at the youngest Uchiha again. Onyx eyes blinked and then the kid frowned.

"Annoying!" he announced and then there was Itachi in the tree with them.

"Will you stop running off!" Itachi snapped.

"NO!" Sasuke shouted and then Kakashi watched as the kid dropped from the tree and ran off. Itachi sighed, he smirked behind his mask, and Sakura giggled.

"Hide-n-seek! I play too!" she declared and darted off as fast as her legs could carry her, down the tree with no hands and then she was gone.

"Agh!" Itachi groaned as he messed up his hair then looked at him. Kakashi was counting though; Sakura had a handicap of a hundred to hide before he would track her down.

"What are you doing?" Itachi demanded.

"It's a game," he shrugged. "Besides, she's more than likely going to just climb another tree."

"A game?" Itachi asked.

"Yes, Sakura and I have turned it into a game for her chakra control. She does it without thinking but it's an exercise for her all the same." Kakashi shrugged. Or he could send the hounds after her, she liked that, and the hounds found it amusing.

"Well, think you could get Sasuke to join the game?" Itachi asked thoughtfully.

"Well, find him and I'll find Sakura and then we'll see, Sakura will do this all day, but it's about concealing chakra and controlling it," Kakashi admitted.

"You won't mind?" Itachi asked uncertainly.

"Not really, she's played with the hyper active, blonde knucklehead and didn't lose it so I suppose it's alright," he shrugged.

"TEME!" a high voice screamed.

"DOBE!" a Sasuke voice shouted back.

"Kami! Not again!" Itachi sighed and then ran off towards Sasuke he supposed. Kakashi just shrugged and then hopped off his branch after Sakura.

There was no sound, and he looked up to where she was.

"Got you," he said as he tossed a shuriken above her head.

There was nothing.

"Huh? Sakura?" he asked. There was a light rustling of the leaves on the tree, and he again activated his Sharingan and watched as her small form nimbly leapt from one branch to another, there was a smile on those lips and he smirked. So she was a cunning one as well as controlled, he could see a lot of potential in the pinkette.

"That's cheating," he informed her as he leapt up after her. She laughed and he grinned as she ran vertically up the tree.

"Gotcha!" he informed her when he caught her when her chakra slipped up and she fell. She was laughing too hard as he rolled on the grass to his feet.



"AGAIN!" she declared.

"Oi, get back here!" Itachi shouted again.

"NO!" Sasuke and Naruto shouted as they ran into him.

"Hello there," he said as he let Sakura stand and stood up to his full height.

"Hide-n-seek! Hide-n-seek!" Sakura declared as she tugged his pants leg again.

"Hide-n-seek!" the other two looked expectantly at him then and then to each other, Sakura was grinning and tugging his pants in her zealous glee.

"Oh good, would you mind letting both of these idiots play with your kid?" Itachi asked him as he caught up.

"Well, do they want to play chakra concealing hide-n-seek?" Kakashi asked the older boy with a bland look. He knew Sakura would play this game all day long and all over the village, it astounded him still that she had the control of her chakra that she had.

"Chakra concealing hide-n-seek?" Sasuke asked.

"Yes, it requires the control over one's chakra to play this game, the entire village is the hiding grounds, and I use any means to find you, and you can use any means to evade me," he admitted. It wasn't training, it was a game, and it happened to be useful for learning to be a shinobi.

"Play! Go!" Sakura declared as she darted off.

"Annoying!" Sasuke declared. "I play!" he darted off after Sakura then.

"Me too!" Naruto ran off then. Kakashi sighed and began counting to a hundred again; he was getting really good at this, he thought as he pulled out his Icha Icha novel and waited.

"You're Kakashi, right?" he looked to the older boy beside him.

"And you are Itachi," he stated. It didn't take a genius to know the noble Uchiha clan by looks alone, onyx eyes, ebony hair, serious expressions that almost never faltered defined the Uchiha.

"I'm sorry about this, Sasuke's been difficult after our mother passed. Father can't even get him to sit down for training," Itachi sighed.

Kakashi nodded his head then.

"You adopted the girl right?" Itachi asked.

"Yes, I adopted Sakura," he agreed.

"Is it always hard?" Itachi asked.

"I don't know, she's the first kid I've ever been around," he

shrugged. He had never been one for kids, his bored demeanor, and his lack of interest drove everyone insane and children always shied away from him anyway. Sakura was an odd one in his mind.

"Aa," Itachi nodded.

"But no, she is not a difficult kid to watch, once I figured out how to keep track of her. She's naturally gifted in controlling her chakra," Kakashi admitted.

"Oh? You didn't teach her running up the trees?" Itachi asked.

"No, I've been running after a toddler who was literally running on the ceiling," he admitted with a chuckle.

"Really! And I thought Sasuke trying to run on walls was tough; he's always blowing through the walls though," Itachi sighed.

"Well, that's part of learning," he shrugged.

"Do you mind watching him for the rest of the afternoon? I have the Academy and father isn't interested in watching an unruly toddler," Itachi explained.

"Just go I'll bring Sasuke home tonight." Kakashi waved the boy off and resumed his reading as he recounted to a hundred. It gave the kids time to hide.

"Thanks!" Itachi said in relief and then he ran off. Kakashi just smirked behind his mask, so he was a babysitterâ€|

This was first.

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><p><strong>Still in a Naruto sort of mood...<strong>

\*\*That's all for now folks!\*\*

\*\*Enjoy Blooming in Darkness! =)\*\*

### 3. Taking Root

\*\*I Do Not Own Naruto\*\*

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><p><strong>Taking Root<strong>

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><p>Sakura's life was interesting at seven as she was going on a 'mission' with Kakashi. It had taken everything; well, a tone of begging, whining and pleading on hers' and Sasuke's parts; Naruto was going if they were going; his parents were all for it if they were going. The one who needed convincing was Kakashi who was going on the diplomatic trade mission. It wasn't dangerous; and she knew because she had found it in his pants pocket when she had been doing laundry; along with three different Icha Icha books, enough kunai for an army, five paper bombs (which had nearly exploded when she had picked them up), forty shuriken, and several other odds and ends.<p>

Doing Kakashi's laundry was a very dangerous task, however, he seemed to have forgotten his mission log and she had brought it straight to the Uchiha house where Naruto and Sasuke were training. This had led to their planning and then hers' and Sasuke systematic wearing Kakashi down.

He was a sucker for silence and peace and she knew her guardian would do anything for it, which meant she had to harass him, and Sasuke harassed him while Kakashi was training him, and Naruto harassed him while training also. It had taken a while in their time period, but they had succeeded. Kakashi had agreed to take them with him to Suna on the condition of he be left in peace while they were there. Of course they had agreed (offering bribery to Naruto in the form of ramen) and Minato had given them a guard of a boy named Sai and another ANBU member named Yamato.

Which was why she was bouncing in her excitement as she stood at the gates with Kakashi while they waited for Naruto, Sasuke, Sai and Yamato. She was all but dancing in her excitement even when she saw her silvery blonde friend, Ino.

"Hey Ino-pig!" Sakura shouted, Kakashi looked up from his smut novel and then resumed reading.

"Billboard brow! What are you doing!?" Ino demanded as she ran up to her. Now to one who did not know the young Yamanaka looked possessed with her silvery blue eyes.

"We got a mission!" Sakura announced.

"I have a mission, you are coming along," Kakashi corrected, she stuck her tongue out to him then.

"Oh, where you going?" Ino asked.

"Suna! Naruto and Sasuke are coming too!" Sakura announced.

She and Ino had been best friends since she had been four and Ino had found her sobbing after some more civilian kids had made fun of her. while Ino comforted her, Sasuke and Naruto had beaten up those civilian kidsâ€| anyways! Yamanaka Ino was her bestest girl friend in the entire world! They did girl things: like sleep overs, make overs, dress up, and things she could not get Sasuke and Naruto to do with her like tea parties! It was fun! Kakashi would leave her with Ino's family when he ANBU missions, or she'd go with the Uchiha family, she was not allowed to sleep over at Naruto's house after they had nearly burned it down. Ino was like a sister too her; though Ino had a stupid crush on Uchiha Sasukeâ€| but that could be overlooked because, though she tried to act like it, she too, and a crush on

him!

"Really! Can I come!/"

"No, your father has training for you to attend if you want to attend the Academy," Kakashi said lazily. She looked at him, he was still reading his weird book, she didn't know what Icha Icha was but Kushina had called them smut books, and she was not allowed to read them. She had one smuggled in her pack because Naruto and Sasuke were also curious about Icha Icha.

"What about Sakura, Sasuke and Naruto!?" Ino demanded.

"I've been tutoring them since they were three," Kakashi said simply. "And will be continuing their training while we travel," he admitted.

"Yay!" Sakura shouted gleefully. She loved training, it was always fun games about speed and chakra endurance, they were always fun!

"Oh, well, you have fun Sakura," Ino sighed when her father shouted for her and had her running after him. Sakura was excited now.

"Sakura!" a voice screamed, "Come on! Hurry up! You're so slow!"

"Wait up Naruto! Sasuke!" she heard Itachi shout.

"Hey Naruto! Hi Sasuke!" Sakura shouted as she waved her hand with excitement.

"Annoying! Hurry up dobe!" Sasuke snapped.

"Why are they so fast!?" Itachi's intended asked, Izumi when she appeared a step behind them. Naruto had her in a hug, Sasuke nodded to her as he scowled at his brother and the girl behind his brother.

"All we're waiting for now is the new kid Sai and Yamato," Kakashi said not bothering to look up from his book.

"Hey Itachi! Thanks for letting me take Sasuke with me!" she announced happily despite Sasuke's scowl. Honestly, he rarely smiled, and was rarely in a good mood since she had known him, apparently it had to do with losing his mother and his father's lack of accepting him.

"Kakashi, are you certain you want to do this? They're a handful!" Itachi panted out.

"It's not a problem, Sasuke is a very well behaved child," Kakashi stated as she and Naruto grinned mischievously.

"You're either insane or too used to having them around," Itachi decided and he left. Sakura looked to Sasuke, he shrugged and she nodded, her red ribbon was on her head, and a gift from Ino.

"Kakashi, can I get a gift for Ino while we're in Suna?"

"Sure Sakura," Kakashi nodded. There was an explosion of smoke and then two others were standing before them.

"Hey Kakashi," the grown up greeted.

"Yamato," Kakashi greeted. If that was Yamato, her eyes turned to the boy of about ten or eleven standing there with a blank face and false smile. She smiled then.

"You're Sai aren't you!?" she guessed.

"Yes," he said uncertainly.

"I'm Sakura! that's Uzumaki Naruto, and Uchiha Sasuke!"

"Knock it off dobe!" Sasuke snapped.

"Loosen up teme!" Naruto shouted.

"Knock it off!" Sakura shouted, her temper turning on them and both boys stopped then. Kakashi chuckled, and Yamato looked confused, Sai looked startled.

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><p>Sasuke would never admit this, not in a million years, but his favorite place on the planet was at Kakashi's house or with Sakura. Naruto was an inevitable, Naruto loved hanging out with them and Sakura treated him like a little brother as well, which he guessed made Naruto family in a way. However, the best place in the entire world was at Hatake Kakashi's residence, Sakura and Kakashi were there and they accepted him.<p>

He could never please his father, he knew this, he would never be as good as his brother, he had come to understand this. But at the Hatake residenceâ€| Kakashi never seemed disappointed in him, never seemed disgusted in him, and Sakura always was there to annoy him or smile. It was like he was a part of her family, just as important to her as that piece of paper Kakashi had given her so long ago saying she had a family. Naruto treated him like he was family as well, which made Naruto family, and Naruto did practically live at the Hatake house too. He had a feeling of belonging there though that he did not have at the Uchiha manor where everyone seemed to look down on him because he was not Itachi. And now he was going off on a mission with them as well.

"Ready to go!" Sakura declared linking her arm in his and Naruto's. He scowled though he was secretly enjoying having her hold onto him. No one ever dared to hold him since his mother had died, no one dared to be soft on him because he was the youngest Uchiha. No one cared about him the way Sakura seemed to and he needed it at time.

"Alright then, you three know the rules. Stay with in my sight, stay

together, and do not get lost or distracted; Naruto!; and Sakura, do not maim the boys, we have a limited first aid, and Sasuke, do not kill Naruto, now we go," Kakashi said as he turned around. Sasuke scowled, he had a façade to keep up. "Also, no fighting, biting, clawing, hide-n-seek, and no sparring until we should reach Suna and then; please do not destroy the village."

"Remind me again why you agreed to take these kids?" he heard Yamato ask as Sasuke looked over his shoulder at the rear of their group where the new guy; Sai was. Sai appeared younger than his brother, but definitely older than them, Sakura would decipher him soon enough and Sasuke would wait for her analyst on the newest members of the group. Sakura was annoyingly observant where people were concerned.

"Because, they are good kids and they would eventually start traveling if they want to be shinobi, why not start now. Besides, they are a sign of good faith for our treaty.

"Uh-huh," Yamato gave him a suspicious look.

"Also, these three are the best team ever formed outside of the Academy, and they are enrolling in the Academy in a couple of years. Just don't have them play hide-n-seek," Kakashi said.

"But I like hide-n-seek!" Sakura argued.

"We know, we play it all the time!" Sasuke snapped.

"Naruto plays ninja all the time," Sakura pointed out.

"Tch, children," Sasuke scoffed. Sakura jabbed his ribs and grinned.

"Ninja is the best thing ever! Believe it!" he shouted, both he and Sakura winced a bit but Sakura grinned. Sasuke rolled his eyes then, she smiled as they followed Kakashi.

"Best behavior and then I'll join you for a game of keep away," Kakashi stated.

"Why did you bring them?" Sai called out.

"Because! We promised to leave him alone and be good to leave him in peace if he took us! Else I was going to rig his bed with explosives!" Sakura said deviously.

"Sakura!" Naruto gasped at their plot being revealed.

"What!? He'd have seen it! Sharingan!" she argued, Sasuke just fought off his snickering; he had offered that plan to Sakura and to help her. Sakura had found the paper bombs in Kakashi's pants when she had been doing laundry.

"Sakura, did you find paper bombs again!?" Kakashi demanded, his one eye glare staring them down. He scowled, Sakura smiled innocently, and Naruto just looked away trying to act innocent.

"Yes, but they didn't go off this time! Sasuke was there to help!"

"I told you to not do my laundry after missions!" Kakashi sighed.

"I know, but it stunk like blood and lightning, and you never do your laundry!" she shouted. Sasuke just smirked as Kakashi scowled and then the journey continued in relative peace.

Since he was three years old and had played hide-n-seek with the most annoying pinkette he had ever met and the biggest dobe on the planet, he did everything with them. And he meant everything, Kakashi was his mentor for his basic jutsus since his father had lost interest in him and Itachi didn't have the time. When he wasn't training with Kakashi he was hanging out with Naruto and Sakura. When he was not with either of them, then he was alone.

He liked it, having it this way, and he really hated when knew people came to invade upon it. Like now as he scowled at Sai and the new guy with Kakashi. They were intruding and he did not like it at all, Sakura grabbed his hand then and squeezed it.

"Aren't you excited!? This is our first mission together!" Sakura demanded and he just blinked.

"Hn," was his answer.

"The teme is not excited for anything!" Naruto snapped.

"Like you'd know dobe," he retorted.

"Such foul language for children so young!" Sai grumbled.

"Huh? Foul language, this is them on a good day," Kakashi grumbled. Sakura laughed, and he felt content with Sakura's laugh, Naruto's confusion, and Kakashi's quiet affections for them. This was more of a family than anything he knew.

And despite all of his grumblings of Sakura being annoying; she was his favorite person.

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><p><strong>Still in a Naruto mood...<strong>

\*\*That's all for now folks!\*\*

\*\*Enjoy Blooming in Darkness! =)\*\*

#### 4. Vines Entwined

\*\*I Do Not Own Naruto\*\*

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><p><strong>Vines Entwining<strong>

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><p>"Wow! Is this Suna!?" Sakura demanded after three weeks of traveling with Naruto and Sasuke; also Sai and Yamato. But it didn't really mean anything, they had been good, Kakashi had threatened to electrocute them. So, yes, it had been a very boring but eventful trip.<p>

"Yes Sakura, this is Suna," Kakashi agreed as she looked around from her perch on his shoulders. She liked her perch, she could see everything from here!

"It's so different!" she admitted delightedly as she looked around.

"Sakura, if you are to stay up there you will hold still, stop your squirming!" Kakashi chided her.

"But it's so different!" Sakura said.

"Yes, it is, but you need to hold still or walk with Naruto and Sasuke," Kakashi threatened. She looked down from her perch at her friends, they were arguing.

"I'm happy here, I'll hold still," she replied solemnly.

"Good," Kakashi replied lazily as he continued reading his Icha Icha book. She didn't know why he loved those books but she knew her guardian owned every single one of them.

"Alright, we'll be taking you kids to the inn, Sai will be watching over you and Kakashi and I will be handling our business. Now," Yamato turned his 'creepy stare' on Sai, Sasuke, and Naruto. "You three will be on your best behavior while we are here. No fighting, unless it is practice spars and even then do no destroy anything; Naruto, Sasuke!"

"Yep!" they squeaked. She giggled as she hugged Kakashi's head, her guardian just sighed and then they were at the gates of Suna. Sakura was loving this as she looked around at the village, it was dusty, it was slightly dull, but it was so different and she loved it as she stared around her. The dry winds tugged at her hair, she felt her red ribbon slip off into the wind.

"Wait! My ribbon!" Sakura shouted as she twisted on her perch.

"I got it!" Naruto shouted.

"Wait Naruto!" Sakura and Sasuke shouted after him. Kakashi let her go as she darted after her friends. She knew Sai was after them as she ran with Sasuke after the ribbon and Naruto. She leapt up, there were people in her way as she grabbed Sasuke and stuck her feet up on the wall.

"Naruto! Get back here!" Sakura shouted desperately. Sasuke stumbled a bit on the wall, but she infused her chakra with her hand before he



could fall and drag her off with him. They had perfected this system over the years and running away from Naruto's crime scenes with him.

"Naruto! You Dobe! Get Back Here!" Sasuke shouted, she tossed Sasuke then with her chakra as she leapt after her friend. They rolled onto the street.

"Hey! Give it here! That's Sakura's ribbon!" she heard Naruto long before she saw him. Sasuke grabbed her wrist, she felt his chakra grip as he pulled her up and tossed her over the wall, she landed on the side of the wall with her chakra sticking her there, she pulled Sasuke with her and they landed on the other side of the wall.

"Huh?" the redheaded boy said.

"It's alright Naruto," Sakura said as she grabbed his shoulder before he attacked the small boy with black lining around his eyes. Sakura smiled at the boy, he looked at the red ribbon with uncertain blue eyes and then he looked at her again.

"is this yours?" he asked.

"Yeah, my bestest girl friend Ino gave it to me!" Sakura explained. The boy looked at the ribbon then and then at her.

"Oh," he said as he held it to her. Sasuke was looming over her shoulder, but she ignored the Uchiha and his scowling presences, he never smiled.

"There you are!" huffed Sai, and she sighed; Sai was weird, but he was sweet. Just really, really, really weird. "Oh, have you made a new friend?" he asked, she shook her head; they weren't friends yet, she didn't know red boy's name.

"Thank you," Sakura smiled as she took her ribbon back and put it in her hair. Then she punched Naruto's arm. "Apologize for being mean!" she snapped.

"Wha!? He wasn't going to give the ribbon back!" Naruto argued.

"Apologize!" she repeated the command as she stood there glaring at her best friend. He just frowned but turned reluctantly to smaller boy.

"Sorry for yelling at you," Naruto grumbled.

"Uh-huh," the boy seemed baffled at the apology and he seemed startled that they were talking to him. She smiled broadly then as she clasped her hands behind her.

"I'm Sakura, that's Sai, this is Uzumaki Naruto, and he's Uchiha Sasuke!" Sakura introduced. "Who are you?"

"Gaara," the boy stammered then.

"Hi Gaara, do you know any good play spots here?" she asked eagerly.

"Uhâ€|" the boy looked confused as he stood there staring at them. "Aren'tâ€| Aren't you scared of me?" he whispered shyly. She looked to her companions, and shrugged then.

"No?" Sakura shrugged. "Why would we be?"

"Ohâ€|" Gaara sighed.

"Sakura we should go to the inn," Sai informed her.

"Right," Sasuke nodded.

"Well, we can't leave him here!" Sakura declared looking at the boy. He looked so lonely and she didn't want to leave him here, she had been lonely before Kakashi had adopted her; she remembered that so painfully clear to her. And before Sasuke and Naruto played with her she had been lonely, now they were her best friends! And before Ino she had been alone when the village kids would make fun of her about her looks; green eyes, pink hair, large forehead; but she had made a friend. Being lonely was no fun.

"And why not?" Sai asked and she looked at him; he was very smart, and she had seen his painting; he was very good at painting but he was not a good people's person.

"Because! He's lonely! He should come play with us!" Sakura explained. The boy's eyes widened. "Being lonely is no fun!" Sakura explained and then grabbed Gaara's hand as she pulled him up to her side. Sasuke just blinked and Naruto pondered this.

"She's right, he should come play with us!" Naruto declared.

"Fine! But we're not adopting him Sakura!" Sasuke informed her.

"Well, we had best be getting to the inn before Kakashi and Yamato track us," Sai said.

"Come on Gaara!" Sakura said as she pulled him along after her and with Sasuke in her other hand as she smiled to Naruto.

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><p>"Sakura! you can't go abducting other people's kids!" Kakashi explained to her that night as he sat at the table with three kids, one other captain, and another older child, and the newest additionâ€| the Kazekage's son. Kami was Sakura ever good at picking up misfits and dragging them home with her. starting with him, then the Uchiha, then the Nine-Tails, the Yamanaka kid, Yamato, Sai (he counted because Sakura had been dragging him along with her these past weeks), and now Gaara. His girl grinned then as she handed a dish to Sasuke; a tomato dish.<p>

"I know but he was lonely, no one needs to be lonely," Sakura argued as she handed a dish to Gaara. He just blinked and Kakashi sighed

again.

"Sakura, we talked about this," Kakashi pinched the brow of his nose in exasperation.

"I know," she grinned happily. "But Gaara likes being here!"

"You're not going to win Kakashi," Sasuke informed him. How was it he was continuously out foxed by these three? Perhaps Itachi right, perhaps he was insane because always ended up being like this for him. At least she hadn't started bringing stray animals home,

"So, Gaara, does the Kazekage know you are here?" he asked as he watched over his kids who were making plans no doubt. Those three were always so busy.

"N-n-no," Gaara mumbled.

"Hmm, well, Sakura and I will return you after dinner; and if you would like we'll come get you in the morning so you can play with them," Kakashi informed the redhead. The kid blinked and then he smiled a bit.

"Really?" he asked uncertainly.

"Yes," Kakashi replied and the rest of the meal was smoot from then. Yamato paled when he was left alone with Naruto, Sasuke and Sai and Naruto started a fight between the boys, he grabbed Gaara and Sakura before she leapt into the fight as well. Gaara was a quiet kid, not that Kakashi really cared, if Sakura wanted him to be her frined he'd not be the man stepping in; unless she was in danger.

"We're here," Kakashi said. The boy looked sad then.

"See you tomorrow Gaara!" Sakura waved as the boy walked into the quiet house. Kakashi frowned. This was not natural. However it didn't matter as he picked Sakura up onto his shoulders and walked her to an inn he was hoping to still be standing.

"Sakura, tomorrow, you must keep the boys in line tomorrow, and in the afternoon we will be train," he informed her.

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><p>Sasuke was sitting there awake when Kakashi and Sakura returned. Naruto and Sai had knocked themselves out, and Yamato had passed out in a form of exhaustion. However, he was not going to sleep until she was here. It weird to sleep when she wasn't around, the annoying pinkette was his normal and he hated having his normal disrupted.<p>

"Hi Sasuke!" Sakura greeted when Kakashi opened the door to their room. He nodded to her as he sat there waiting, Kakashi said good night, the door was shut and she came over with a smile.

"Night!" she declared happily and he found himself in a tackle hug as

they hit the mattress, this was normal. He pulled away from her and she lay there besides him. The silence filled the dark room as they both found sleep.

"Sasuke?" her voice whispered after a while.

"Hn?" he responded.

"Why do you think certain people are left alone?" she asked him softly. He stiffened at her innocent question, her fingers grabbed his hand and he entwined their fingers as they both lay there in the dark. Naruto's snores were loud then, Sai's mumblings were initerate but clearly he was agitated; however they were both out of it so he felt safe to give her an honest answer.

"Because, some people can't be loved," he answered. Outside of this room, he didn't think anyone loved him, and he knew no one in the Uchiha clan took him seriously. He was just the youngest Uchiha. At least until Itachi would marry Izumi and they'd have kids he'd be the youngest.

"That's not fair," Sakura mumbled.

"Life's not fair," he stated, stating his father's favorite fact of life. A thing he was continuously told, over and over.

"Are you still lonely?" Sakura whispered.

"No," he admitted. She squeezed his hand and he just stared at the ceiling.

"I love you Sasuke," she mumbled and he felt her fall asleep because she flopped over and then wrapped herself around him like she was some octopus or something. He sighed as her arms wrapped around his head and her leg wrap around his chest. Yup, his normal.

"Sakura?" he poked her stomach then. Sakura grumbled as she curled around him again.

She was lucky he liked her. If he didn't like her he'd punch her in the gut. He was just lucky she wasn't like Naruto who thrashed around violently, hugged people and then punched them in his sleep. And no, he did not ever share a bed with that dobe, but the damage the dobe did to his bed and pillows; and all the noise he made; was proof enough for Sasuke. Sakura just wrapped herself around whatever was warm and stayed there until she woke up; he had discovered this as a toddler. She could even anchor Naruto during napttime; however she'd wake up with bruises; which was why she slept with him.

"I like you," he admitted into the sleeping room; no one would ever need to know he liked her.

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><p><strong>That's all for now folks!<strong>

\*\*Enjoy Blooming in Darkness! =)\*\*

**\*\*I Do Not Own Naruto\*\***

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><p><strong>Sharpening Thorns<strong>

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><p>"Hi Gaara!" Sakura waved as Sasuke and Naruto were learning about sparring from Kakashi. Her red friend hesitated like usual before he trotted over to them and watched the boys with her. Over the past few weeks Sakura had gotten to know Gaara really well, he was actually really sweet if you asked her, and he had a cool jutsu he couldn't even control really; it would just react to his will. He was also really good at wall bal; a normal game of kick the ball played on the walls, he was always on Naruto's team because Sasuke was ALWAYS on her team. This was not negotiable, Sasuke and she had been on the same teams; no matter what the game they were playing; since she had been three. Naruto and Sasuke on a team was a fast way for stuff to start breaking; bones included.<p>

"Sakura," Gaara nodded to her. she noticed two older children behind him, a blonde girl with four pigtails in her hair, and a grouchy looking boy.

"Do they want to join?" Sakura asked, looking to Gaara for an answer. He looked a little confused when he looked over to the two other kids behind him, and then he looked sad.

"They don't like me," he mumbled.

"Nonsense," she stated; her new favorite word since she had heard it from Captain Yamato, it was a really cool, good word, to use! "Come on! Let's go ask, Naruto and Sasuke are almost done with training and then we'll play wall ball!"

"Really?" he asked quietly as he blushed when she grabbed his wrist.

"Yeah! Kakashi's even going to play and so is Sai, Yamato said he'd referee, but I don't know what that is," she whispered conspiratorially in Gaara's ear as she pulled him along with her. He grinned a bit as he stumbled after her.

"Hi! Would you like to play wall ball with us!?" she asked once she was standing before the two older kids.

"Huh?" the green eyed, blonde girl blinked; she kind of reminded Sakura of a cat, in a good way, there was a cunning in those green eyes.

"Yeah! We play kick the ball on the walls, it helps with chakra control according to Kakashi!" Sakura explained.

"And you want us to join?" the older boy asked.

"Sure, it's funner when you have more people, more of a challenge!" Sakura explained; she could even sucker Shikamaru into playing back home; and that was a feat! But he was annoyingly good at the game tooâ€|

"Funner is not a word," the girl informed her.

"Well, you wanna play or not?" Sakura persisted, ignoring the older girl's jab at her wording. And funner was too a word! How else was someone supposed to say something was more fun than normal!?

"Uhâ€|sure?" the girl guessed.

"Great! I'm Sakura, they're Sasuke, Naruto, Kakashi, Yamato, and Sai, and this is Gaara; come on!" Sakura grinned as she grabbed both of their wrist with her chakra latching on too as she pulled them after her.

"What are your names!?" she asked eagerly as she pulled the older kids along.

"I'm Temari, that's KankurÅ•," the girl introduced herself.

"Kakashi! I have more people!" Sakura shouted.

"SAKURA!" five voices shouted at her; Gaara chuckled and she grinned broadly.

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><p>"Well, that is the last of the negotiations," the Kazekage informed him later that evening. He heard laughter from an open window and he looked to where the Kazekage was looking. Sakura had convinced everyone to play a game of wall ball again, the Suna trio were playing as well and seemed to be having a lot of fun with Sasuke, Sakura and Naruto.<p>

"I see your daughter convinced all my children to join her in this folly," the Kazekage said. Kakashi's exposed eye slid over to the man.

"Sakura does not tolerate leaving lonely people alone, even when they want to be alone," Kakashi stated simply. Mostly he remembered the first time he had met her as a nameless, tiny, pink toddler and let her return home with him. Then she had gone and adopted Naruto and Sasuke as hers' and his life had forever been turned upside down; in a good way.

"Your daughter should learn to fear monsters," the Kazekage mumbled.

Kakashi's glare turned on the man in full force, the girl lived in a warring age, she had been orphaned by a war, and though she could always be happy and smile, she had nightmares; dangerous nightmares, from time to time about whatever horrors she had survived before he had taken her in.

"Not all children need fear in their lives," Kakashi said simply. "She is young, there will be time to fear later, for now, she should be happy."

"I do not disagree, but she also has no respect for the power some monsters possess," the Kazekage stated. Kakashi looked out that window. She was playing with two jinchÅ«riki, an Uchiha, and the other two Kazekage children, along with one of Danzo's elite assassins; monsters were clearly something Sakura did not see in these people.

"Perhaps, it is in treating monsters like they are human beings rather than weapons, that she is able to tame the monsters you speak of. No matter, I will be taking my party away tonight, thank you for this trade agreement, Kazekage-sama," he bowed a bit as he tucked the agreement into his pack and then left the office. Sakura was kind, he thought when he stopped to see Sasuke power kick a ball up to Naruto, she brought misfits together and made it all work.

Oh that wasn't to say she didn't have her flaws; he knew them extremely well too. She was quick to temper, deceptively sweet at times, possessive, a little selfish and a tad spoiled, but she was good at heart. Her heart was big, her love was honest, she was always loyal to her friends too, despite her young age and all that could entail; for all the heartaches it could cause as well. She was light, in a world enshrouded in darkness.

In fact, she reminded him a lot of Rin.

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><p>"Bye Gaara! Don't forget to write us!" Sakura waved as she left.<p>

"Come on Sakura," he grabbed her and pulled her after him. She just frowned a bit as she jogged to keep up with him. Sasuke felt exasperated with her, she was so loud and demanding and she was so slow! If she said goodbye anymore they were never leaving Suna! It must be a girl thing, he guessed.

"Bossy," she grumbled.

"Sakura! Sakura! Watch this!" Naruto shouted ahead of them. Sasuke frowned at her attention being diverted from him and then the dobe made a hand sign. "Shadow clone jutsu!"

BANG!

They were both looking at a mini-dud of a Naruto clone. He frowned and then scowled at the dobe, Sakura clapped.

"Just keep practicing, Naruto!" Sakura said carefully.

"Drat! I thought it'd work that time," Naruto grumbled.

"What is it supposed to be?" Sai asked then.

"A shadow clone!" Naruto shouted.

"Huh," he shrugged and resumed following the captains. Sakura jogged to keep up with him as she held Naruto's hand while he was pouting. Sasuke didn't really care though if the dobe's feelings were hurt or not, he was irritated with Sakura holding the dobe's hand!

"Sasuke, when we get home we should have a slumber party, Kakashi's got another ANBU mission," Sakura said suddenly as she grabbed his hand. He looked down at their linked hands and then at her as she walked with Naruto holding her other hand.

"Hn," he nodded.

"Great! And just in time for your birthday too!" Sakura declared, he scowled. He hated his birthday, and he didn't get why the pinkette insisted on celebrating his birthday all the time. Her birthday he could understand because it was her adoption day; March 28th, that they celebrated for her.

"Damn! I forgot about teme's birthday!" Naruto exclaimed.

"No ramen," Sasuke snapped.

"Huh!? But it's the best present ever! Right Sakura!?" Naruto pleaded. He smirked at Sakura's false smile then.

"Sure it is Naruto, maybe though we should get Sasuke something he'd want for his birthday and not something you'd want for your birthday," Sakura said delicately as she squeezed his hand. At least he wouldn't be having ramen for a birthday gift, again. The dobe was predictable.

"Fine! But I'll get the bestest kick ass birthday present ever! Sakura, you're going to help!" Naruto informed them.

"Alright Naruto," Sakura nodded.

"Kakashi, can Sakura sleep over on my birthday?" Sasuke asked.

"Sure. I needed to speak with Itachi about your family taking her for a while anyway," Kakashi said indifferently.

He grinned a bit knowing he'd be keeping his best friend for a while, Kakashi was going on a mission! That meant Sakura would be staying with his family, that was good. He liked it when she was home with him, his father didn't like looking at him and his brother was busy; not neglectful like some people thought, but his brother was working really hard to join the ANBU black ops, and to become the head of the family and to train him in his spare time. Itachi was a very good brother, but he was a very busy brother too; which was why he liked having Sakura around.



"YAY!" she shouted as she pulled from Naruto to give him an octopus hug, caught off guard he felt himself blush, and then she was back between him and Naruto, holding their hands as she hummed happily. Sasuke did catch the amused look Kakashi was giving him.

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><p>Naruto was grinning that night when they made camp as he and Sakura whispered about what to get Sasuke for his birthday. Sakura had decided to get Sasuke a set of shuriken he had wanted, and Naruto settled for getting the teme a set of kunai; generic gifts, he knew; and not as awesome as ramen, but Sakura insisted Sasuke would rather have weapons than ramen.<p>

"Sakura, can I tell you a secret?" he whispered as he sat there watching his food cook over the fire.

"What?"

"I kind ofâ€¦ like you," he mumbled as he blushed.

"I like you too Naruto! You're my bestest friend!" she declared and he turned redder as he stared at the fire.

"Well, this makes me and Sasuke rivals!" Naruto declared.

"Nonsense, I love you both, and you're best friends! Not rivals!" Sakura informed him tartly, he just chuckled happily at her superior look. He and Sasuke, though best friends, were always rivals, but now they were also rivals for Sakura's affections. Besides, Naruto had liked her longer and Sasuke had nicknamed her 'annoying' when they had first met. To be fair though, he had nicknamed Sasuke teme after Sasuke had nicknamed him dobe.

"Sakura, Naruto," Sasuke said as he sat on Sakura's other side. Naruto couldn't help but grin in delight; he loved having his favorite people around him, his parents, Sakura, Kakashi, Sakura, Sasuke, Sakura, and everyone else; and Sakura! He hated feeling alone and Sakura had never hated him for being a jinchÅ«riki; which was apparently a very bad thingâ€¦

"Hey Sasuke! We know what you're getting on your birthday!" Sakura declared.

"Hn," he grunted and Naruto scowled.

"You could be more excited about it, teme!" Naruto snapped.

"Whatever dobe," he mumbled.

"No fighting!" Sakura screamed. He scowled, Sasuke glared at him, and Sakura glared at the two of them as she sat there scowling.

"He started it," Naruto defended.

"Tch," was Sasuke's response.

"That's it! You wanna go teme!" Naruto shouted.

"Sure," Sasuke snapped as he surged to his feet, Naruto lunged for him only to find him and Sasuke yanked apart forcefully.

"Get along or this will be a very long trip home!" he and Sasuke both shrank from creepy eye's look.

"Fine!" he and Sasuke squeaked as they glared at one another.

"Boys, Sakura, time to get ready to sleep, got a long day ahead of us," Kakashi called out.

"Fine," they all grumbled.

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><p><strong>Still in a Naruto mood...<strong>

\*\*That's all for now folks!\*\*

\*\*Enjoy Blooming in Darkness! =)\*\*

## 6. The Blight

\*\*I Do Not Own Naruto\*\*

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><p><strong>The Blight<strong>

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><p>It was the night of Naruto's eighth birthday when everything went to hell.<p>

Kakashi had left on a mission with Guy earlier that week, he was due home in three days from today. He had left her in the capable care of Itachi and Sasuke before leaving, but that wasn't where she was tonight. Tonight she was at the Uzumaki house that night, it was a rare exception for her to sleep over here because it was Naruto's birthday, the Uchiha family had been happy to drop her off at the Uzumaki house for the night. Tomorrow she'd be back to the Uchiha home again. She was happy to be here, it was her 'brother's' birthday. The Uzumaki family teased her that Naruto had a big sister, and that was fine with her, she thought of Naruto as her brother anyways.

"Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday Dear Naruto! Happy Birthday to you!" Everyone sang as the cake was placed before a drooling, grinning Naruto.

"Make a wish!" Sakura ordered. Kushina chuckled, and Minato grinned as Naruto blew out the candles then.

"Cake Time!" Naruto declared as Kushina cut the cake then.

"Can I have my wish now too?" Naruto asked.

"And what would that be?" Sakura asked blandly.

"A kiss!" Naruto snickered.

"No! You idiot!" she yelped as she whacked his head then.

"Ow! Ow! Ow! Sakura!" he whined, everyone was laughing as she scowled at him.

"You're worse than Sasuke," Sakura grumbled as she bit into her cake. Though Sasuke would never ask her for a kiss or something, he'd punch her if she even tried to kiss him; and Gaara would never dare to ask for a kiss either. Not that it mattered, only Naruto was so bold as to ask for it and since he was pouting she sighed, Sakura gave him a quick peck on his cheek as she finished her cake and stood up with her plate.

"YES!" Naruto screeched, she rolled her eyes then as she put her plate in the sink for Kushina. They continued playing their games until she and Naruto passed out.

The explosion shook the house as she and Naruto leapt into each other's arms as they frantically looked around.

The Fourth Hokage was out of the house then as she grabbed Naruto and hauled him with her. they looked out the window at what had happened.

"Kushina, get the kids to safety!" Minato shouted.

"What's going on?" Naruto whispered.

"It's not the Nine Tails," Kushina announced as she checked Naruto's stomach, Sakura blinked at the sight of the seal. "Alright, Naruto, Sakura, into the cellar, stay there until we get you guys," Kushina ordered as she shoved her and Naruto into the cellar.

"Wait! Sasuke!" she panicked.

"Stay there, the Uchiha will be fine!" Kushina stated as the door was slammed and locked.

"NO! Lemme out!" Sakura screamed as she pounded her fist on the door, but there was no answer. Sakura's heart slammed mercilessly in her ribs as her eyes widened, her body pressed to the door and the panic set in.

"I can't, I can't, I can't!" she whispered. The walls and darkness were closing in on her, she screamed then. Bloody memories surfaced

as she screamed into the darkness.

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><p>"Wait Sasuke!" Itachi screamed, but he didn't slow as he slid beneath the tangled feet of a Cloud-nin who reached to grab him. Sasuke pulled the enemy's kunai as he stabbed him in the leg and then he was up and running again. He had to get to the Uzumaki house! He had promised Kakashi he'd take care of Sakura!<p>

"Get back here Uchiha brat, your Sharingan will do," a cloud-nin grabbed for him. He saw the moves though he knew he shouldn't be able to see the moves. He moved on reaction for a child, his arm hooked around the man's arm, he was lifted into the air then, he slashed his weapon then, the man fell back onto the ground. Scrambling to his feet he ran through the chaos towards the Uzumaki house as he ran straight to the house. He saw everything around him as he slipped around everyone and got to the house.

He leapt at the shut door of the battered Uzumaki house, he slashed through the door.

"AAAHHHH!" a girl screamed.

"Sakura!" Naruto screamed, he leapt at the door, slashing through all the wood as he landed into the darkness atop the pinkette.

"I can't! I can't! I can't!" she screamed and then she scrambled away from him as she darted out of the cellar and towards the front door.

"No Sakura!" he and Naruto shouted as they leapt for her, he crashed into her, wrapping himself around her as he pulled her away from the tattered door.

"Lemme go! Lemme go! I can't!" she screamed.

"Sakura!" he shouted as he pulled her under him and glared into her green eyes. They were wild eyes, he had never seen her look so scared.

"Weâ€| we can't stay here," Naruto huffed out.

"Sakura, calm down," Sasuke snapped. "We have to stay calm and stay together. You cannot panic."

"Your eyesâ€|" she whispered.

"What? What about them?" he demanded as he pulled away from her and looked at his reflection in the window, ohâ€| they were red, a single tomoe spinning in them each.

"I've got one!" someone shouted as they appeared in the Uzumaki house, Sasuke grabbed Sakura's wrist.

"Stay away!" Naruto screamed as he leapt over them to slam into the

intruder.

"Back door!" Sasuke shouted. Sakura yelped with another man appeared behind the one Naruto slammed into and leapt to stick on the wall. He slashed at them. "Out the front door!" he decided as he dragged her and Naruto out after him.

"Don't kill the one with the Sharingan! We need him," someone shouted.

"I got the real Byakugan brat!" someone else shouted as he slid to a stop when he found himself staring at a squirming HyÅ«ga girl who looked terrified.

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><p>"Let her go," Sasuke ordered as he released her wrist. Sakura stared at Hinata, she didn't really talk with Hinata but she knew who the girl was.<p>

"Hey, I got another Sharingan brat!" the captor shouted.

"Don't kill this one," someone shouted.

"Move!" Sasuke shouted, she grabbed Naruto with her chakra infused hand as she leapt onto the wall. Naruto swung his legs, he slammed into the one who had Hinata. Sasuke slammed into him and Sakura released Naruto as she landed on her feet, grabbed the unconscious HyÅ«ga girl as she dragged her off. She was terrified about this but she wouldn't stop running as she leapt over the wall.

"After the pink girl!" the enemy shouted.

"Keep running! Get to Itachi!" she heard Sasuke scream as she ran up onto the wall, then she decided to go for the wires which would be too weak for heavy men, she darted up the telephone post then. She moved as the wire was grabbed, a snap had her leaping up with the dead weight of the other girl

"What the hell is up with these kids!?" Sakura looked over to see men on the telephone poles then. She was trapped.

"Cut the wires," the man on the other pole ordered.

"Catch!" she screamed, she dropped the HyÅ«ga girl as she stepped off the wire, Naruto caught the HyÅ«ga girl and ran, Sasuke ran after Naruto as she fell to the ground after him and ran on the walls.

"What the hell do they feed the kids here?" a man behind her shouted.

"Just get the damn Sharingan and Byakugan! Orochimaru made a deal with us!" a man shouted. Sakura leapt up, she caught a flimsy tree branch, and when they were in striking range released it, they howled in pain.

"This way!" she called to Sasuke and Naruto, they leapt over the wall to join her.

"Where's Itachi?" Naruto demanded. Sasuke's whirling red eyes scanned the area, Sakura's breath hitched at seen the Sharingan, but they remained silent.

"That way," Sasuke whispered as he pointed.

"Kay, wake the HyÅ«ga girl up!" Sakura hissed, as she peeked over the wall. She didn't know anything about the Byakugan, but she knew it was what these guys were after, she knew that they were also after her friend's Sharingan.

"Pst, Pst! Wake up!" Naruto hissed.

"What do you see Sasuke?" she hissed in the Uchiha's ear. His red eyes were whirling, almost like his eyes were discombobulated or something, disconnected too, they whirled around taking in everyone and everything around him.

"Everything," he answered.

"Where do we go?" Sakura hissed.

"That way, get the HyÅ«ga girl awake; they're after the Sharingan and Byakugan," he whispered.

"Naruto? Is she awake?" she hissed down the wall.

"Coming 'round!" he answered.

"Keep quiet dobe!" Sasuke hissed. Sakura leapt down to the girl as she gently shook her, bleary pearl colored eyes opened.

"Hi, I'm Sakura, that's Naruto, and he's Sasuke, we're all going to get through here together," Sakura whispered to the girl with a smile. Though she was scared she'd hide her fears, old nightmares swirled in her mind's eye but she'd look past it all.

"The Cloud!" she gasped.

"Yeah," Sasuke answered. "Let's go!" he hissed.

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><p>Sasuke grabbed Sakura then and pointed.<p>

"We're going that way, we're taking the walls," he whispered.

"Kay," she nodded. He looked to the dobe and the small HyÅ«ga girl was looking confused and terrified as she came to.

"Sakura, take HyÅ«ga, take the walls," he hissed.

"Yep," she nodded, he watched as Sakura grabbed the HyÅ«ga girl onto her back then they ran.

"Where are we going?" the HyÅ«ga girl asked.

"Itachi," Sakura answered then and he nodded as he took the lead, Naruto the rear and they covered the girls. "Hang on!" Sakura shouted as she leapt onto the wall, they ran through the thick of the fight, he wove their path through the battle field, the screams and battle cries could be heard, he saw Sakura's fears, and Naruto's uncertainty as they ran but they didn't slow. The HyÅ«ga girl clung to Sakura, her veins were pulsing as her Byukugan was used, he didn't know what she was seeing but she gasped suddenly.

"Beside us!" she shouted, the wall was crashed through as a shinobi tried to grab Sakura. the pinkette and the HyÅ«ga girl screamed when the hands grabbed for them.

"No you don't!" Naruto shouted as he slammed into the shinobi then. Sasuke came from behind as he stabbed the falling man, grabbed the dobe and resumed running. Sakura leapt down, he watched as she landed on the head of a shinobi then was up in a tree again as he darted after her. Naruto was hot on his heels as he caught up to her.

"Sakura," he shouted as he caught up to her.

"The enemy is heavy that way, but if we go around we can get to the Uchiha manor," the HyÅ«ga girl explained. He nodded, his eyes were still whirling around as he tried to adjust to seeing everything. This range of vision was scary to him as he ran with Sakura and Naruto.

"Watch out for the enemy," Sasuke ordered as they ran together. They made it to the roofs then and didn't stop. The dobe slammed into the girls, knocking them to the ground as he leapt, spinning into the air then as he released his only weapon into the head of an enemy as he fell to the ground after Naruto and Sakura.

"Sasuke!" they all looked up at the call of the voice then, they saw Izumi then as she landed before them.

"Kami, we've looking everywhere for you!" she scolded, her own Sharingan whirling around wildly.

"Get out of here," he heard his father shout, Sasuke turned just as a kunai with a paper bomb slammed into his father's shoulders.

There was a flash of light as he was knocked off his feet and back into the rubble.

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><p><strong>That's all for now folks!<strong>

\*\*Enjoy Blooming in Darkness! =)\*\*

**\*\*I Do Not Own Naruto\*\***

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><p><strong>Trampled Sprouts<strong>

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><p>"How are they doing?" she heard Kakashi's voice then.<p>

"Sasuke landed on her and the HyÅ«ga girl; they were saved from most of the blast. Izumi took a brunt of the blast too, Naruto, Sakura, Sasuke, and Hinata will all be right, Izumi as well, though she suffered a many burns." She heard a voice explain.

"How did this happen? Most of the Uchiha and HyÅ«ga? And the village," Kakashi growled then.

"Numbers, sheer amount of numbers, and even Sharingan and Byakugan users can be overwhelmed, it's just challenging. The only known survivors though have been taken in by the Fourth Hokage as he negotiates with the Cloud for peace or retribution; I know the few survivors of the HyÅ«ga clan wants retribution, but Uchiha Itachi is the only survivor, with his brother and Izumi of the Uchiha Clan so I do not know what he will demand for this atrocity," the voice murmured. Sakura winced as her nose twitched, her eyes cracked and she saw Kakashi at the end of her bed.

"Kakashi," she sighed.

"Hey kido, how are you feeling?" he asked as he came around to sit beside her then.

"Hurt," she breathed, everything in her hurt.

"Well, getting blown up does that to a person." He informed her as he stroked her hair.

"Naruto? Sasuke?" she demanded looking around.

"They're in the other room, they are fine," he assured her. Sakura sighed, her ribs were killing her as she stared up at him.

"Hinata?" she asked.

"She's fine as well," Kakashi nodded as he stroked her hair.

"What happened?" she asked.

"Greedy ninja, it cost us a great deal but you're safe," he stated. She blinked.



"Why?" she asked.

"Well, we have the two very powerful kekkei genkei, the Sharingan and the Byakugan, and those weapons are very formidable and something the enemy wanted and something they died protecting. The attack was futile though, however many died. You're alright though, that's all that matters," Kakashi informed her as his brow came to rest on hers'. She stared at him with wide eyes, he was crying, carefully she moved her bandaged hand to come up and rest on his cheek.

"I'm okay," she promised. He was hugging her then, she could feel his tears and she bit her bottom lip to stem her own tears as she hugged his head then.

"I was so scared!" she finally sobbed out as she clung to her guardian. "I thought the darkness was going to eat me again! I thought I was going to die! I thought Naruto was going to die! I thought they were going to take Sasuke! I thought I was going to be killed again!" she sobbed as she clung to him.

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><p>Kakashi said nothing as he pulled her to him and held her close like she was a fragile little doll. Sakura curled up in his arms as she clung to his chest sobbing. She had only vague memories of being that scared, and they were bloody and just before she met Kakashi.<p>

The only thought he held onto was that his kid, his baby, she was alright, she was safe, the Uchiha kid and the Uzumaki kid had kept her safe as they kept the HyÅ«ga girl safe too. It didn't matter though, the loss was already catastrophic. He didn't know if either clans would ever recover from the losses in their clans; but he didn't care about it because he had only been worried for one kid in the village.

The pink had been easy to find amongst the rubble.

Thank Kami for that; finding his kid had led to them finding the youngest Uchiha, the Uzumaki, and the HyÅ«ga heiress. And they had all been alive, Izumi had been with them too, but these matters meant little to him as he carried his kid to him as he had carried Sakura to the hospital. It had been three days since the attack, and now his kid was finally awake.

Thank all of the spirits and gods for that blessing because he hadn't lost everything again. She was alive, that was all that mattered to him as he held her close.

"Kakashi, can I see Sasuke and Naruto?" she cried against his chest.

"Sure," he sighed and looked to the nurse who nodded the alright for her to be taken out of the bed. Picking up his kid's eight year old trembling body and carried her to the boys' room then. They were in the same room, mostly so the Sharingan kekkei genkei was safe under

the ANBU guards with the Fourth's son and the HyÅ«ga survivors standing guards as well.

"Hey boys," he greeted as he walked around the ANBU guards and to the kids' bed.

"Hey! Sakura! You're alright!" Naruto shouted in glee.

"You're alive," the Uchiha boy greeted Sakura as Kakashi put her on the bed of Sasuke. Naruto was already up and about, healing quicker than the normal person with the fox inside him.

"Sasuke! Naruto!" she cried out as she hugged them both and burst into tears. Kakashi sighed, he saw the relief of the boys as he watched them carefully hug his girl. At least they were all alright, he might have centered his world around the pinkette, and he might prioritize her over all of them, and though he hadn't initially cared about the others in her group, he was very relieved that her group of friends was alive.

"Sakura!" Ino cried out as she ran through his legs and leapt to the bed to hug Sakura then. Kakashi sighed as he looked to the young Uchiha survivor who left the bed and hobbled to him.

"Thank you, Kakashi," Sasuke said and then he hobbled to where Sakura was sitting with Ino and Naruto.

"You know, he doesn't thank people since losing Mom," Itachi informed him, Kakashi looked at the young Uchiha then.

"He's doing just fine," Kakashi assured Itachi.

"You know, it's pathetic, I think you know my brother better than I do," Itachi chuckled wryly.

"He does practically live at my home," Kakashi pointed out blandly.

"Aa," Itachi chuckled. Kakashi sighed in relief though that those three kids were a solid team even in the midst of chaos; at least that was according to HyÅ«ga Hinata.

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><p>Hinata poked her head into the hospital room where there was a lot of laughter coming from. She blushed when she saw the trio of trouble as the village called them. Sakura sat between the boys, Ino was on the bed too, and they were all smiling as they chatted.<p>

"I'm glad you're alright!" Sakura shouted as she hugged both the boys tightly, then Sakura grinned at her. "Hey! You're okay too!"

"H-h-h-hi," Hinata stuttered then, she felt herself turning redder than ever before as she stood there shyly in the door.

"You're Hinata, right?" she looked up at the masked man leaning on the wall then.

"Y-y-y-yes," she stammered.

"I'm glad to see you're recovering nicely as well, I'm sorry for your losses," he said as he picked her up. Hinata yelped as she was picked up and then she was put on the bed

"You're Hinata, right?" Ino asked her then. Both the boys were looked at her with wide eyes. Sasuke grabbed Sakura and hauled her to him as Ino sat in Sakura's place. Naruto was grinning beside her.

"Y-y-yes," Hinata answered.

"I'm Naruto, that's Ino, that's Sakura, and that's teme!" Naruto announced in a cheerful tone. She looked to the group he had just pointed out, the Uchiha boy's brow was twitching as he sat there and Sakura was grinning, Ino was smiling and Hinata feltâ€¦ welcomed, she looked at Naruto and tears welled up in her eyes as she felt the slip past her guard then.

"What did you call me dobe!?" the Uchiha demanded.

"Teme, that's your name after all!"

"You're going to pay!" and with that there was a crash onto the tiled ground, Sakura sighed, Ino just blinked and Hinata had a watery smile at the sight.

"I'm sorry about what happened to your family," Sakura said as she hugged her tightly then. "I wish there was more we could've done for your family," Sakura said as she hugged her. Hinata cried then as she held onto the pinkette.

"Get back here dobe!" Sasuke shouted as he tore after the blonde out of their hospital room.

"Make me!" Naruto shouted and Hinata sobbed harder as she sat there being hugged by two girls, who were the first time she was accepted outside of her family. The first kids who didn't ask if she was a possessed with her eyes.

"It'll be alright Hinata," Ino assured her. Hinata said nothing as she cried and held onto the two girls who were hugging her tightly. She felt Ino and Sakura's tears as well as her own as she sobbed with the loss of much of her family and at the memories of nearly being taken that night.

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><p>Sasuke made it through the day with the dobe, Ino, the HyÅ«ga girl, and Sakura, Kakashi stood guard outside their door and he knew Itachi was talking with the council about the attack. For the last

three days he had dealt with not knowing how his friends had been, and knowing the state of his family, but today he was informed of the total loss. Sakura and Naruto though, they were alright, and that had been his saving grace, it had saved him today when Sakura and Naruto had visited him.<p>

But now, it was night, and he was sitting in his bed staring out the window, Sakura was back in her room and Naruto's parents had taken him back to his room, it was why he was sitting alone now.

"Can I come in?" a cold voice asked, he turned his head to see his brother standing in the door then.

"Hn," he answered as he looked out the window again. He was going to be alone again, wasn't he? Not worthy of his family's love or hopes, or even their acknowledgement because of his appearance like his mother.

"You know it's just you, me, and Izumi now," Itachi informed him as he sat down on the bed. Sasuke blinked as he stared at his big brother. Itachi smiled then, a sad smile.

"Aa," he answered sadly and looked out the window.

"You did a good job protecting your friends and saving the HyÅ«ga heiress," Itachi informed him. "Father would be proud of you."

"How do you know?" Sasuke asked and his brother blinked then. "How do you know father would have been proud of me?" he asked then. He had never heard his father say he was proud of him. The only one who had ever seemed proud of him was his brother, and though he had strove for their father's love and approval he knew he didn't have it; he'd never have it; Itachi would always be better than him. And that didn't make him bitter towards his brother, just envious.

"Because, I am proud of you, you saved Kakashi's girl, you saved the Fourth's son, and you saved the HyÅ«ga heiress, you did a good job Sasuke," Itachi said firmly as he poked him on the brow. His breath hitched at the affection of his brother.

Sasuke looked at his brother with tired eyes then.

"Why did they attack?" he asked finally.

"Because, the Cloud wanted our visual prowess," Itachi answered him. "And from what I've learned from the Yamanaka clan they have a deal with a former Sannin, Orochimaru who is obsessed with our Sharingan."

"Will they attack again?" Sasuke asked, he wanted Sakura and Naruto to be safe; Kakashi would always be tough to catch but stillâ€ he wanted his friends safe.

"I don't know, but Sasuke; always be on guard now, if Orochimaru is after our Sharingan then there is a high likelihood he will be back for us," Itachi answered.

"Let him come I will destroy him," Sasuke snarled. All he could think of was of how they had threatened his friends and taken his family from him. Itachi's eyes widened then. "No one hurts what's mine

without being hurt back," he snarled.

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><p><strong>That's all for now folks!<strong>

\*\*Enjoy Blooming in Darkness! =)\*\*

End  
file.